



MEDIA RELATIONS PLAN

The Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra



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PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENT

1. IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

A problem that the Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra (JSYO) faces is the steady decline of members every year. This is generally caused by the lack of new 6th-11th grade members compared to the members graduating high school each season (August-May).

2. BACKGROUND

a. Executive summary

The JSYO needs a growth in members in order to perform at its peak ability. Strategies like consistently communicating to the public on social media, contacting journalists, and updating parents through email newsletters will be implemented to boost the organization's reach. Because it is the only youth orchestra within a 70-mile radius of Madison County in Tennessee, the style of music the JSYO utilizes is niche to the surrounding area. JSYO concerts provide the public with the opportunity to listen to classical music for free; however, the COVID-19 virus still prevents many people from gathering in groups. With strategic planning, the JSYO can see an increase in engagement online and in-person.

b. Problem description

The yearly decline of JSYO members harms the orchestral experience for the remaining young musicians. One of the benefits of joining a youth orchestra is getting the opportunity to perform with other musicians and the collaboration between each instrument's melody. According to Cheryl Marvin, the Executive Director of the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra, "a newer youth orchestra may only have 30 musicians... (Office

& Marvin). However, the JSYO has existed for 20 years and continues to struggle reaching at least 30 members each season.

c. Organization background

The Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra was established over 20 years ago by the Jackson Symphony Orchestra. The JSYO serves West Tennessee by providing a safe place for young musicians to develop their musical abilities under professional instruction. The orchestra's conductor is Grace Jones. Jones graduated from Union University with a music degree and is very active in the local music scene. She is a member of the JSO and its Integrative Medicine Program, is a teacher at the Medina Music Academy, conducts the elementary string ensemble Sinfonia, and more. Activities that the orchestra presents include multiple concerts, side-by-side concerts with the JSO, a concerto competition, a composition competition, and a summer camp.

d. SWOT analysis

- Strengths:
 - The only youth orchestra within a 70-mile radius of where it is based (Jackson, TN)
 - Inclusive environment for young musicians who seek classical instruction
 - Allows members who are homeschooled
 - Allows stringed instruments – violins, violas and cellos – something that is not allowed in school marching band programs
- Weaknesses:
 - Is experiencing a steady decline in members
 - Is based on a style of music that is niche to the geographical area

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- Does not have its own dedicated rehearsal building (shares Union University's band room), and younger kids may cause disturbances to college students trying to practice their instruments
- Parents may think that the program is too expensive or unnecessary to their child's development
- Children may think that classical music is boring or uncool
- Young musicians may quit due to outside obligations
- Opportunities:
 - Need for an organization focused on giving children an orchestral education
 - Concerts serve the community by offering free admission and classical performances
 - Opportunities for music teachers to teach in the area
 - Make classical music accessible to all
 - Generate excitement for a centuries-old music genre
- Threats:
 - Ongoing COVID-19 infections
 - Alternate/more appealing after-school activities
 - A lack of diverse instruments currently in the program
 - Less funding from sponsors because of the dwindling number of members

e. Media analysis

The JSYO has not had any earned media in several years.

3. GOAL, OBJECTIVES, TACTICS

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- a. GOAL: The goal of the media plan is to maintain past members of the JSYO and increase the number of new memberships by raising brand awareness.
- b. OBJECTIVE: Retain current user engagement on Facebook by 90% and gain 10% more followers by the end of the season.
- c. OBJECTIVE: Reach out to three local journalists by the end of the season to improve community relations.
- d. OBJECTIVE: Establish an email newsletter/schedule and acquire 30 new subscribers by the end of the season.
- e. TACTICS: Facebook posts, guest blog posts, success stories, television interviews, press coverage on events, emails, and digital newsletters.

4. AUDIENCE

The target audience includes young musicians (6th-12th graders who play an orchestral instrument, children who are not yet old or experienced enough), family and friends of young musicians (parents, grandparents, mentors), and community leaders (JSO staff, sponsors of JSO, music teachers, arts council members).

5. MESSAGES

KEY MESSAGE 1: At JSYO, children receive the opportunity to further their musical experience by performing concerts around West Tennessee. These changes in environment supports personal and musical growth as members are able to learn from people with different backgrounds.

KEY MESSAGE 2: JSYO serves the community by teaching and offering members chances to give back through their musical talents. A component of music is about the give and take of the feelings music brings to those who listen to it.

KEY MESSAGE 3: Personal and musical development are on the forefront of JSYO's mission. Participating in a youth orchestra offers unique experiences to children that affect the rest of their lives as people and musicians.

6. TRACKING & EVALUATION

The success of the media plan will be tracked by using data from previous seasons and comparing it to the outcome. Data will include the number of memberships from year to year, the number of returning members, the number of members who graduated, and the number of new memberships.

Additionally, Facebook interactions will be tracked using Facebook's analytics tool, and email/digital newsletter engagement through MailChimp.

All measurements will be analyzed and used in the creation of the next media plan.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Now that the problem of yearly decreases in memberships has been recognized, the JSYO can grow by taking initiative with its media relations. In order to improve its membership numbers, the JSYO needs to create a stronger social media presence, earn media coverage by establishing relationships with journalists, and keep parents informed through frequent email communication. These tactics will be measured and evaluated for the benefit of the organization's mission and vision.

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8. APPENDICES

a. Media list

Media Type	Outlet	Job Title	Beat	Contact
Local Print	The Jackson Sun	Reporter	Community Highlights	Angele Latham
Local Broadcast	EPlusTV 6 (6 in the City)	Hosts	Local Entertainment	Steve Bowers and Cassandra Fuller
Blog	Americans for the Arts	VP of Research, Reporter	The Arts	Randy Cohen
Blog	Best Things TN	Writer	Best Local Things	Alli Hill
Podcast	Classical Classroom	Host	Classical Music	Dacia Clay
Blog	Our Jackson Home	Program Director, Editor	Local Spotlights	Courtney Searcy
Print Journal	Our Jackson Home	Program Director, Editor	Local Spotlights	Courtney Searcy
Magazine	The Jackson Symphony	Executive Director	Jackson Symphony	Sherry Freeman
Local Broadcast	WBBJ 7	Multimedia Journalist	Local Arts Scene	Diamon O'Daniel
Radio	WKNO 91.1	Hosts	Local Arts	Darel Snodgrass and Kacky Walton

Contact	Email	City/State				
Angele Latham	alatham@gannett.com	Jackson, TN				
Steve Bowers and Cassandra Fuller	Contact form on EPlusTV6.com	Jackson, TN				
Randy Cohen	rcohen@artsusa.org	Washington, DC				
Alli Hill	alli@fleurishfreelance.com	Toccoa, GA				
Dacia Clay	classicalclassroomshow@gmail.com	Seattle, WA				
Courtney Searcy	courtney@atttheco.com	Jackson, TN				
Courtney Searcy	courtney@atttheco.com	Jackson, TN				
Sherry Freeman	sfreeman@thejacksonsymphony.org	Jackson, TN				
Diamon O'Daniel	dodaniel@wbbjtv.com	Jackson, TN				
Darel Snodgrass and Kacky Walton	darelsnodgrass@wnofm.com	Cordova, TN				

b. Proposed tactics and topics

For media appearances, interview Grace Jones for topics relating to the Youth Orchestra's mission, events, or competitions.

Before or after concerts, young musicians can be interviewed by journalists if they consent.

For coverage on side-by-side concerts, JSO Executive Director Sherry Freeman and Artistic Director/Conductor Peter Shannon will be available to speak.

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Story Titles

Top Family-Friendly Events in Jackson, Tennessee
Activities for Children Who Are Not Interested in Sports
After-School Music Programs for Children
Why Supporting Young Musicians is Important
How a Group of Young Musicians is Inspiring Their Community Through the Power of Music
Local Concerts in West Tennessee
Creating the Next Generation of Musicians
Where to Support the Arts in Your Area
How a Small Youth Orchestra Gives Children the Opportunity to Musically Thrive
Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra Upcoming Concerts

Story Ideas

Things to do locally	
How to support young musicians	
Family outings	
How to get children interested in classical music	
The importance of the arts	
How classical music is an inspirational force	
After-school activities	
The local music scene	
Concerts for children	
Gain youth orchestra attendance	
Gain audience attendance	

c. Sample pitches

Subject line: How young musicians are spreading holiday cheer

Hi Diamon,

I have been following your coverage of events in Jackson, Tennessee. Your work in 'Nonprofit connects Henderson community with free Thanksgiving meals' and 'Youth votes for favorite tree in Hardeman County' is especially heartwarming because it is inspiring to see community members work together to help those going through a tough time during the holiday seasons. I also noticed that you are supportive of youth in the fine arts, like Jordan Williams in 'West Tennessean to appear in new movie 'It's Christmas Again'.'

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The Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra will be presenting a Christmas concert at the Jackson-Madison County General Hospital at 3pm on Dec. 4, 2022. Admission is free and open to the public, and there will be many opportunities during the concert for photos, videos, and interviews.

I think that your audience will resonate with this story because it relates to the local youth giving back to their community by bringing holiday cheer to patients, families, and hospital employees with their musical abilities.

Best,

Ellia Parrish, Public Relations Student

Subject line: Local Youth Orchestra Presents Christmas Concert

Hi Steve and Cassandra,

In addition to your coverage of local artists and entertainers, I admire and appreciate your segment about the Lifeline Blood drives on the Nov. 15 episode of 6 in the City. Donating blood saves lives. As someone with family members who have experienced medical emergencies and siblings who work in the medical field, the importance of blood donation is close to my heart.

Patients and healthcare workers can enjoy holiday music as The Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra will be presenting a Christmas concert at the Jackson-Madison County General Hospital at 3pm on Dec. 4, 2022. Admission is free and open to the public, and there will be many opportunities before and during the concert for photos, videos, and interviews.

I think that your audience would be interested in hearing about the event because of your dedication to informing them about community healthcare initiatives and keeping them updated in the local entertainment scene.

Best,

Ellia Parrish, Public Relations Student

d. Sample collateral

News Release



Public Relations Student

Contact: Ellia Parrish

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123-456-7890

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 16, 2022.

Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra to Host Statewide Composition Competition

JACKSON, TN—October 16, 2022--High school and college students in Tennessee are invited to enter The Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra's composition competition later this season.

The winner will have their piece performed by the Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra in Jackson, Tennessee.

"We can't wait to see what our young people have been learning and practicing," The Jackson Symphony said. "They are our future!"

The Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra is one of the many programs under the Jackson Symphony Orchestra umbrella. This fall marks the 20th anniversary of the existence of the youth orchestra.

Their mission is to empower and educate young musicians by fostering a positive learning environment and providing professional instruction to members.

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The deadline to apply for the composition competition is Dec. 1, 2022.

Completed scores must be emailed to JSYO@email.com with the applicant's name, age, school, and city of residence.

The winner's composition will be performed during the JSYO's spring concert on April 30, 2023.

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Message Map

CLIENT: Jackson Symphony Youth Orchestra		
QUESTION/CONCERN/OPPORTUNITY: Increase the number of new JSYO memberships by raising brand awareness.		
KEY MESSAGE 1	KEY MESSAGE 2	KEY MESSAGE 3
At JSYO, children receive the opportunity to further their musical experience by performing concerts around West Tennessee. These changes in environment supports personal and musical growth as members are able to learn from people with different backgrounds.	JSYO serves the community by teaching and offering members chances to give back through their musical talents. A component of music is about the give and take of the feelings music brings to those who listen to it.	Personal and musical development are on the forefront of JSYO's mission. Participating in a youth orchestra offers unique experiences to children that affect the rest of their lives as people and musicians.
SUPPORTING INFO 1.1	SUPPORTING INFO 2.1	SUPPORTING INFO 3.1
The orchestra will present three concerts during the season. In the past, Christmas concerts have been hosted at the Jackson Madison County General Hospital for patients and families.	JSYO's conductor, Grace Jones, is an advocate for music therapy. She performs in local hospitals and cancer centers through The Jackson Symphony's Integrative Medicine Program. Her leadership in the community sets a good example to JSYO members.	In JSYO, members learn how to collaborate with the conductor, the musicians in their section and the orchestra as a whole. From the tempo to the volume, there are a lot of factors to consider when playing in a group. These networks are extremely intricate and will prepare members for the

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		relationships they may have in their future endeavors.
SUPPORTING INFO 1.2	SUPPORTING INFO 2.2	SUPPORTING INFO 3.2
Members who are homeschooled can participate in All West and All State through JSYO. These events connect members with other musicians from around Tennessee.	Members have been asked to speak to the Jackson Arts Council on behalf of the youth symphony, have performed for the Jackson TN chapter of The Links Inc's program for Jackson's Artistic Youth and	Participating in an orchestra can give musicians confidence in their playing. In private lessons and recitals, musicians play solo or with an accompanist. In an orchestra, musicians are supported by the conductor and every other musician.
SUPPORTING INFO 1.3	SUPPORTING INFO 2.3	SUPPORTING INFO 3.3
The Jackson Symphony Orchestra hosts a side-by-side concert with the youth symphony every year. Here, JSYO members receive expert instruction and participate in rehearsals with professionals in the industry. It gives them a chance to experience how a professional orchestra operates. Generally, rehearsals and performances are held at the Carl Perkins Civic Center.	JSYO hosts two competitions throughout the season. One is a concerto competition, and the other is a composition competition. In the concerto competition, current members audition in front of a panel of judges and a public audience. For the composition competition, up-and-coming Tennessean composers in high school and college are eligible to participate. The winner will have their composition performed by the JSYO.	Orchestra is a niche interest, and members can make lifelong friendships with other musicians in their area. It is common for musicians to share tips about instrument care and techniques, as well as teach others about their instrument. Learning how each section plays their instrument helps musicians understand the work, passion, capability and effort it takes each individual to perform.

REFERENCES

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